SUPERMAN
STARRING IN
ACTION COMICS
ALL NEW!
60¢
NO. 543
MAY
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
I'VE WON!
HE'S BACK!
NEUTRON
THE MAN WITH THE NUCLEAR PUNCH!

ROCKETED AS A BABY FROM THE EXPLODING PLANET KRYPTON, KAL-EL GREW TO MANHOOD ON EARTH--WHOSE YELLOW SUN AND LIGHTER GRAVITY GAVE HIM FANTASTIC SUPER-POWERS! IN THE CITY OF METROPOLIS, HE POSES AS MILD-MANNERED NEWSMAN CLARK KENT--BUT BATTLES EVIL ALL OVER EARTH--AND BEYOND--AS...
SUPERMAN
Created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER
MARV WOLFMAN WRITER
CURT SWAN PENCILLER
DAVE HUNT INKER
BEN ODA GENE D'ANGELO
LETTERER COLORIST
JULIUS SCHWARTZ EDITOR
METROPOLIS PRISON...
YOU CALLED ME HERE FOR MY OPINION! WELL, I'M SORRY I HAVE TO BE THIS ADAMANT--
--BUT, IF YOU GRANT PAROLE FOR NAT TRYON, ALSO KNOWN AS MEUTRON, YOU'RE ENDANGERING THE ENTIRE CITY OF METROPOLIS--
-- IF NOT THE WORLD!
OUTSIDE THIS PRISON, AWAY FROM THE SPECIAL FACILITIES I BUILT FOR HIM--
--MEUTRON'S POWER IS UNCONTROLLABLE!
S-4123
"WITHIN THESE HANDS..POWER!"

ACTION COMICS, (USPS 004-480), Vol. 46, No. 543, May, 1983. Published monthly by DC COMICS INC, 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10103. Second Class Postage paid at New York, N.Y. and Additional Mailing Offices. Copyright© 1983 by DC Comics Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. No actual persons, living or dead, are intended or should be inferred. Printed in U.S.A.

Advertising Representative, Sanford Schwarz & Co., 555 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017, (212) 593-1400.
SUBSCRIPTION DEPT.: DC COMICS INC., P.O. Box 1308-F, Fort Lee, N.J. 07024. Annual subscription rate $7.20. Outside U.S.A. $8.00.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to DC COMICS INC., P.O. Box 1308-F, Fort Lee, N.J. 07024

Jehette Kahn, President and Publisher
Joe Orlando, Vice Pres.-Editorial Director
Dick Giordano, Managing Editor
Julius Schwartz, Editor
E. Nelson Bridwell, Consulting Editor
Karen Berger, Editorial Coordinator
Bob Rozakis, Production Manager
Paul Levitz, Vice President-Operations
Bruce Bristow, Marketing Director
Arthur Gutowitz, Treasurer
A Warner Communications Company

HIS FISTS CONTAIN THE POWER AND ENERGY OF A NUCLEAR EXPLOSION--
--AND, SHOULD TRYON BE GRANTED THAT PARDON, I COULD NOT VOUCH FOR THE SAFETY OF OUR CITY.
AND THAT, GENTLEMEN, IS THE WAY I SEE THIS. THANK YOU.
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN OF THE PAROLE BOARD, I DON'T MEAN TO IMPUGN SUPERMAN'S TESTIMONY... INDEED, OUR GREATEST HERO IS CORRECT ABOUT NAT TRYON'S POWER--
--BUT... HE IS WRONG ABOUT NAT TRYON, THE MAN! EVEN SUPERMAN WILL NOT DENY THE SUFFERING NAT TRYON WAS SUBJECTED TO.
NAT ADMITS HE WORKED FOR THAT MADMAN, LUTHOR--THAT HE WAS SENT WITH HIS FRIENDS TO DESTROY THE S.T.A.R. NUCLEAR REACTOR.*
*ACTION COMICS #525 -- JULY
"THERE WAS AN ACCIDENT, SUPERMAN SAW AND SAVED HIS TWO COMPANIONS, LEAVING NAT TRYON TO SUFFER A RADIOACTIVE FATE THAT PROVED FAR WORSE THAN DEATH.
"WITH IMPOSSIBLE DETERMINATION, TRYON FREED HIMSELF...
"WEAK WITH RADIATION POISONING, HE STILL MANAGED TO STAGGER BACK TO LUTHOR'S LAIR...
"... WHERE THE CRIMINAL SCIENTIST SUBJECTED HIM TO FURTHER RADIATION UNDER THE GUISE OF CURING HIM.
"BUT, WHILE TRYON WAITED FOR THE MADMAN TO END THE TREATMENTS, LUTHOR WAS CAPTURED BY SUPERMAN..."
2

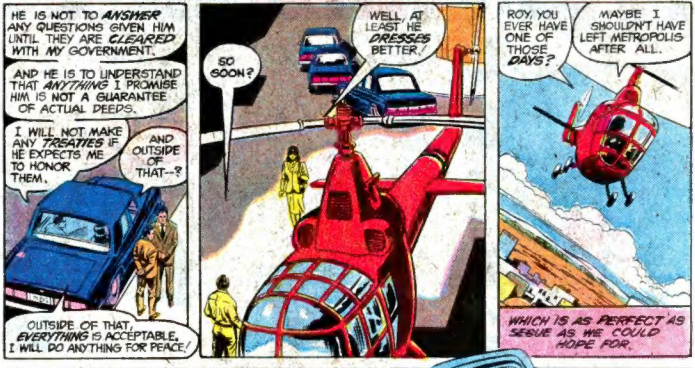
...LEAVING POOR TRYON TRAPPED BENEATH THE GENETIC TAMPERING OF LUTHOR'S MACHINE.
HE WAS HELD THERE IN STASIS FOR MORE THAN ONE YEAR WHILE HIS BODY WAS CHANGED...
...WHILE HE WAS IRREVOCABLY ALTERED INTO THE NUCLEAR MONSTER HE'S BECOME.
AND EVEN WHEN HE WAS FREED, TRYON WAS WAS STILL TRAPPED--HIS BODY REDUCED TO PURE ENERGY. IF HE EVER REMOVES HIS PROTECTIVE SUIT, TRYON WILL DIE!
HASN'T NAT TRYON SUFFERED ENOUGH? THE ONLY HUMANE THING WE CAN DO HERE IS TO FREE HIM FROM HIS SECOND PRISON ...METROPOLIS PRISON.
WE'VE HEARD THE PSYCHIATRISTS' REPORTS THAT SAY NAT TRYON IS NOW ABLE TO DEAL WITH THE TRAGEDY THAT SPAWNED HIM.
TO FURTHER INCARCERATE THIS WRECK OF A MAN WOULD BE A GROSS INJUSTICE. WE WILL GRANT PAROLE.
YOU MAKE THE LAWS, GENTLEMEN, AND I'LL OBEY THEM. BUT I FEEL YOU'RE THE ONES WHO HAVE COMMITTED A GROSS INJUSTICE--
--TO THE PEOPLE OF METROPOLIS.
HEY, SUPES, NO HARD FEELIN'S, RIGHT?
TRYON, I SINCERELY HOPE YOU CAN CONTROL YOUR POWERS. IF YOU DON'T, I SWEAR I'LL BE THERE, BREATHING DOWN YOUR NECK.
THAT'S WHAT I LIKE ABOUT YA, BUDDY--YA SAY WHAT YA MEAN.
AN' SO DO I, BUDDY! YEAH, I KNOW JUST HOW TO USE MY POWERS...
I'M GONNA DESTROY YA!
HA HA HA HA
3

METROPOLIS' PROBLEMS SEEM SO VERY FAR AWAY HERE IN THE MIDDLE EAST...
...INDEED, FOR LOIS LANE, THEY ARE COMPLETELY FORGOTTEN...
I DON'T BELIEVE I LUCKED INTO THIS, ROY! WHEN PERRY SENT ME HERE, I REALLY DIDN'T BELIEVE I'D GET BOTH THESE INTERVIEWS.
IT'S NEVER BEEN DONE. KYAMM AND BEN-DAVID DON'T EVEN ACKNOWLEDGE THE EXISTENCE OF EACH OTHER.
YOU'LL GET A PULITZER FOR THIS, MISS LANE.
THAT WOULD BE NICE, WOULDN'T IT, ROY?
MY FIRST REAL ASSIGNMENT IN YEARS AND I SCORE A COUP!
I'LL SHOW ALL OF THEM--LOIS LANE IS STILL THE BEST REPORTER ANYWHERE!
WE'RE HERE, MISS LANE. ALI KYAMM'S TENT IS RIGHT OVER THERE.
YOU'VE BEEN A DOLL, ROY. THANKS.
I'M LOIS LANE FROM THE METROPOLIS DAILY PLANET...
YES--YOU ARE EXPECTED.
BUT I AM NOT HAPPY. NO, I AM NOT. I AM SAD TO TELL YOU THIS, MISS LANE--
--BUT ALI KYAMM DECIDES NOT TO DO INTERVIEW. HE WILL NOT SPEAK ALONGSIDE THAT AGGRESSOR!
BUT I CAME HERE ALL THE WAY FROM THE U.S.! PLEASE, ABDUL, CAN'T YOU DO SOMETHING FOR ME?
I CAN'T GO BACK HOME WITHOUT AN INTERVIEW.
4
AHH, MISS LANE, SO GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN. WE MEET IN WASHINGTON, TWO YEARS AGO, REMEMBER?
ABDUL SAUDI, OF COURSE... THE REAGAN RECEPTION. HOW ARE YOU?
AND HOW IS YOUR WIFE--SHARMA, IF I'M RIGHT?
OH, YES. YOU AMERICANS DO NOT FORGET ANYTHING, NO. SHARMA IS STILL LOVELY AS EVER.

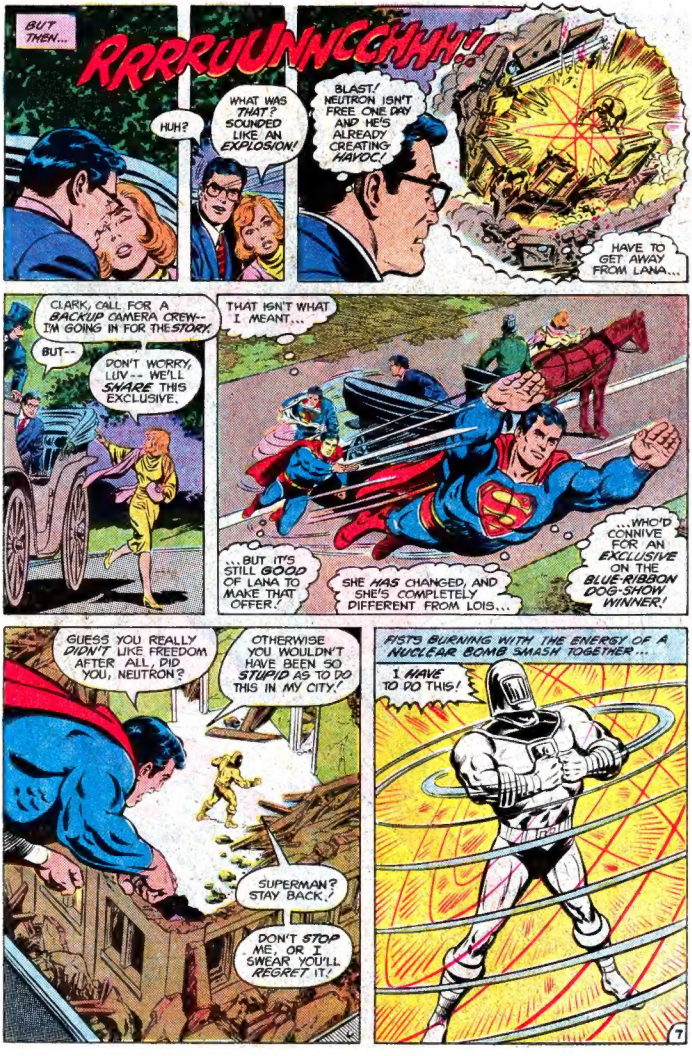
CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

NO! NO! NO! NO INTERVIEW! NO TALK! NOTHING!
I WILL NOT MEET WITH ANY IMPERIALIST WAR-MONGER.
PLEASE, ALI KYAMM, THINK OF THE PUBLICITY...THE WORLD WILL SEE YOU AS A GREAT PEACE-MAKER!
IT WILL ENHANCE YOUR REPUTATION IN EVERY NATION!
I SAID NEVER! BEN-DAVID IS AN EARTH-PIG. HE SHOULD BE PUT INTO A CIRCUS.
I WILL NEVER MAKE PEACE WITH HIS COUNTRY.
SO FAST--?
IT DOESN'T TAKE LONG TO GET NOTHING ACCOMPLISHED.
KYAMM SQUELCHED THE INTERVIEW.
I'M REALLY SORRY TO HEAR THAT, MISS LANE.
MAYBE YOU'LL HAVE BETTER LUCK WITH PRIME MINISTER BEN-DAVID.
LET'S HOPE SO. HE'S SUPPOSEDLY A SHREWD POLITICIAN. BUT AT LEAST HE'S SOMEONE I CAN TALK TO.
SHORTLY...
THE PRIME MINISTER IS ANXIOUS TO SPEAK WITH YOU, MISS LANE.
HE'S QUITE FAMILIAR WITH YOUR WRITING.
HE HAS THE DAILY PLANET FLOWN IN EVERY MORNING.
OH, PLEASE--LET THAT BODE WELL.
HELLO, MISS LANE. PLEASE COME IN AND SIT.
YOU WANT SOME TEA? OR DO YOU AMERICANS PREFER COFFEE?
IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU?
MR. PRIME MINISTER, THERE MOST CERTAINLY IS!
THE TWO-WAY INTERVIEW WITH YOU, MR. KYAMM AND ME--I HOPE YOU'RE STILL INTERESTED, SIR.
INTERESTED? TO BRING PEACE TO THIS TROUBLE-TORN AREA, I WOULD WALK THE DESERT TO HIS COUNTRY!
5

YOU DON'T KNOW HOW *RELIEVED* I AM TO HEAR THAT!
OF COURSE, MY COUNTRY DOES HAVE CERTAIN *NEEDS* WHICH I AM SURE YOU CAN UNDERSTAND.
NEEDS, MR. PRIME-MINISTER?
ALI KAMM IS NOT AN *ELECTED* OFFICIAL, MISS LANE. TO MEET WITH HIM WOULD GIVE HIM A *STATUS* MY COUNTRY DOES NOT WISH TO GRANT.
THEREFORE, HE IS *NEVER* TO USE MY NAME IN TALKING WITH ME.


HE IS NOT TO *ANSWER* ANY QUESTIONS GIVEN HIM UNTIL THEY ARE *CLEARED* WITH MY GOVERNMENT.
AND HE IS TO UNDERSTAND THAT *ANYTHING* I PROMISE HIM IS NOT A GUARANTEE OF ACTUAL DEEDS.
I WILL NOT MAKE ANY *TREATIES* IF HE EXPECTS ME TO HONOR THEM.
AND OUTSIDE OF THAT--?
OUTSIDE OF THAT, *EVERYTHING* IS ACCEPTABLE. I WILL DO ANYTHING FOR PEACE!
SO SOON?
WELL, AT LEAST HE *DRESSES* BETTER.
ROY, YOU EVER HAVE ONE OF THOSE *DAYS*?
MAYBE I SHOULDN'T HAVE LEFT METROPOLIS AFTER ALL.
WHICH IS AS PERFECT AS SEGUE AS WE COULD HOPE FOR.

METROPOLIS PARK...
CLARK, WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER *MOST* OF OUR LIVES... BUT I NEVER KNEW I COULD CARE FOR YOU *THIS* WAY.
WHAT DO THEY SAY ABOUT FRIENDSHIP *BLOSSOMING* INTO LOVE?
I'M A LITTLE *STUNNED* BY ALL THIS MYSELF, LANA--
--BUT I CAN'T SAY I'M *SORRY* IT HAPPENED.
LANA'S REALLY *CHANGED*. SHE'S NO LONGER THAT *FLIGHTY* KID NEXT DOOR.
NOW SHE ACTUALLY LIKES CLARK MORE THAN SUPERMAN.
SHE PREFERS MY *QUIET* SIDE TO THE GLITTER THAT SURROUNDS SUPERMAN.
AND *THAT* IS A WELCOME CHANGE!

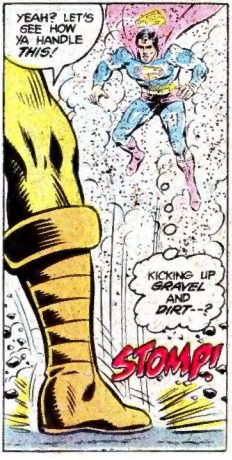

BUT THEN...
RRRRUUNNCCHHH!!
HUH?
WHAT WAS THAT? SOUNDED LIKE AN EXPLOSION!
BLAST! NEUTRON ISN'T FREE ONE DAY AND HE'S ALREADY CREATING HAVOC!
HAVE TO GET AWAY FROM LANA...
CLARK, CALL FOR A BACKUP CAMERA CREW-- I'M GOING IN FOR THE STORY.
BUT--
DON'T WORRY, LUV -- WE'LL SHARE THIS EXCLUSIVE.
THAT ISN'T WHAT I MEANT...
...BUT IT'S STILL GOOD OF LANA TO MAKE THAT OFFER!
SHE HAS CHANGED, AND SHE'S COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM LOIS...
...WHO'D CONNIVE FOR AN EXCLUSIVE ON THE BLUE-RIBBON DOG-SHOW WINNER!
GUESS YOU REALLY DIDN'T LIKE FREEDOM AFTER ALL, DID YOU, NEUTRON?
OTHERWISE YOU WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN SO STUPID AS TO DO THIS IN MY CITY!
SUPERMAN? STAY BACK!
DON'T STOP ME, OR I SWEAR YOU'LL REGRET IT!
FISTS BURNING WITH THE ENERGY OF A NUCLEAR BOMB SMASH TOGETHER...
I HAVE TO DO THIS!
7

...EXPLODING WITH A FORCE GREAT ENOUGH TO SEND THE MAN OF STEEL CAREENING HELPLESSLY SKYWARD...
BARR
OOOMM!
I WASN'T PREPARED FOR THAT... DIDN'T SET MYSELF UP IN TIME TO *SHAKE OFF* THE EXPLOSION.
WELL, NO USE *CRYING* OVER WHAT'S DONE WITH--
--NEUTRON HAS TO BE *STOPPED* AND I'M THE ONLY ONE AROUND WITH THE POWERS TO DO IT!

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

NEUTRON, THAT WAS DEFINITELY A MISTAKE!
WRONG, PAL. YOU WANNA KNOW WHAT'S A MISTAKE?

YOUR COMING HERE!
THAT WON'T WORK AGAIN! I'M PREPARED!
BTRAMMM!


YEAH? LET'S SEE HOW YA HANDLE THIS!
KICKING UP GRAVEL AND DIRT--?
STOMP!

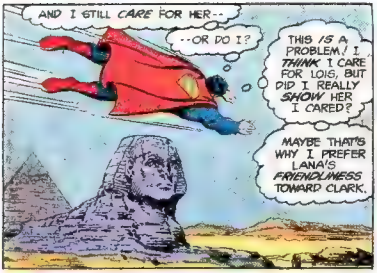
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING!
A LITTLE DIRT MAY HAVE BLINDED ME FOR A SECOND--
--BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO DO BETTER IF--

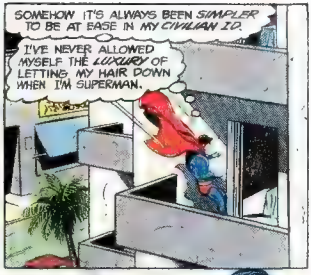
PALLIE, I WASN'T TRYIN' TA STOP YA, JUST SLOW YA DOWN WHILE I RIPPED OPEN MY SUIT!
MAYBE I CAN'T PLANT YA SIX FEET UNDER--
9

--BUT I CAN SURE GET OUTTA HERE AND TRY AGAIN LATER!
I HAVE TO GRANT YOU THIS, NEUTRON--YOU CAN TRY TO ESCAPE...
...BUT I DON'T INTEND TO LET YOU!
--NOT EVEN WHILE YOU'RE IN YOUR ENERGY FORM!
I'M SPINNING AROUND YOU AT SUPER-SPEED... SETTING UP A CYCLOTRONIC EFFECT!
UNLESS YOU WANT YOUR EVERY ATOM DISPERSED FROM HERE TO SATURN--
--I STRONGLY SUGGEST YOU SURRENDER!
HE'S UNCONSCIOUS... GUESS HE COULDN'T TAKE IT.
JUST AS WELL... IT MAKES PUTTING HIM IN HIS SPECIAL CELL THAT MUCH EASIER.
10

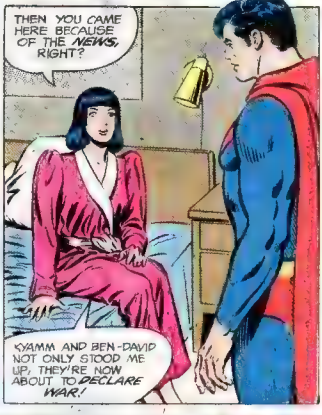
I'M SURE YOU'RE NOT SURPRISED, WARDEN, BUT YOU HAVE A NEW TENANT.
TRY TO SEE HE DOESN'T GO FREE.
WILL DO, SUPERMAN.
I'LL STOP ON MY WAY HOME AND FILE AN OFFICIAL CHARGE.
IN A WAY, THIS IS A SHAME. I'D REALLY PREFER SEEING MY FORMER FOES REFORM...
... BUT EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN ME THAT MY HOPES RARELY COME TO PASS.
LUTHOR'S FEIGNED REFORM A DOZEN TIMES--BRAINIAC WAS ACTUALLY RE-PROGRAMMED ONCE... BUT SADLY, THAT DIDN'T LAST LONG.
ABRAXAS? ANOTHER CASE IN POINT--VANDAL SAVAGE OWNS THE CORPORATION--SAYS HE'S STRAIGHT...
abraxas
...BUT I KNOW HE'S PLANNING SOMETHING... EVEN IF I CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHAT IT IS.
WELL, HE'LL TIP HIS HAND SOON ENOUGH, HIS KIND ALWAYS DOES.
SHORTLY..
UH-OH...
CLARK? WHERE WERE YOU? I LOOKED EVERYWHERE!
UHH... I RUSHED BACK HERE, BUT MY CAB WAS CAUGHT IN TRAFFIC. I--JUST SHOWED UP.
DO YOU WANT TO PICK UP WHERE WE LEFT OFF?
I WOULD LOVE TO, CLARK, BUT I'M DOG-TIRED.
LET'S MAKE IT ANOTHER DAY. IS THAT OKAY WITH YOU?
NO PROBLEM. YOU NEED THE REST, LANA.

SEVERAL MINUTES LATER...
UH-OH, SOMETHING IS DEFINITELY WRONG. I'VE NEVER HEARD PERRY SO ANGRY BEFORE!
&%$$%#! WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU? YOU NEVER WORK! YOU RUIN EVERYTHING I HATE YOU!
PERRY WHITE EDITOR IN CHIEF
HOPE IT'S NOT JIMMY. HE'S CHEWING OUT.
I WANT YOU DESTROYED! YOU HEAR ME--DESTROYED!
HUH?
PERRY, WHAT'S GOING ON ... HERE?
IT'S THIS BLASTED V.D.T.* IT JUST LOST AN ENTIRE STORY!
I TELL YOU--THESE COMPUTERS ARE RUINING THE WORLD!
YOU OKAY OTHERWISE? YOU'RE HERE AWFULLY LATE, AREN'T YOU?
*Video Display Terminal -- Jules
THAT'S MY BUSINESS, ISN'T IT, KENT? BESIDES, YOU'RE HERE, TOO.
SORRY, PERRY--I DIDN'T MEAN TO PRY, SAY, HAVE YOU HEARD FROM LOIS? HOW'S SHE DOING IN THE MIDDLE EAST?
SHE ISN'T! BOTH SIDES HAVE REFUSED TO TALK, I TELL YOU, CLARK--THE GIRL'S DISTRESSED!
HER FIRST OVERSEAS ASSIGNMENT IN YEARS AND SHE THINKS SHE'S FOULING UP. I FEEL SORRY FOR HER.
MAYBE I CAN MAKE IT UP TO HER.
WELL, IF YOU HEAR FROM LOIS, SAY "HI" FOR ME. HAVE A GOOD NIGHT, PERRY.
YEAH, SURE. ME AND MY V.D.T. I TELL YOU, THESE THINGS CAN LEAD AN EDITOR TO--MURDER!
BUT, SECONDS LATER, THE PROBLEMS OF MODERN-DAY JOURNALISM HAVE FADED FROM CLARK KENT'S THOUGHTS, ONLY TO BE REPLACED WITH CONCERN FOR..
LOIS TOOK THIS ASSIGNMENT BECAUSE OF ME--I'VE BROKEN SO MANY DATES--MY SHOWING UP NOW MIGHT BE JUST WHAT SHE NEEDS.
AFTER ALL, WE'D BEEN TOGETHER SO MANY YEARS.
AT LEAST I SHOULD TRY TO MAKE HER HAPPY--EVEN IF I'M NOW FEELING CLOSER TO LANA.
12


AND I STILL CARE FOR HER--
--OR DO I?
THIS IS A PROBLEM. I THINK I CARE FOR LOIS, BUT DID I REALLY SHOW HER I CARED?
MAYBE THAT'S WHY I PREFER LANA'S FRIENDLINESS TOWARD CLARK.

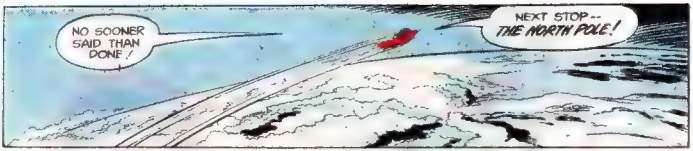

SOMEHOW IT'S ALWAYS BEEN SIMPLER TO BE AT EASE IN MY CIVILIAN I.D.
I'VE NEVER ALLOWED MYSELF THE LUXURY OF LETTING MY HAIR DOWN WHEN I'M SUPERMAN.

MAYBE THAT SHOULD CHANGE.
SUPERMAN? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
HI.
WOULD YOU BELIEVE I WAS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD?
CAN I COME IN?
OF COURSE. UNLESS YOU CAME ALL THIS WAY TO STAND ME UP AGAIN.
NO.


THEN YOU CAME HERE BECAUSE OF THE NEWS, RIGHT?
KYAMM AND BEN-DAVID NOT ONLY STOOD ME UP, THEY'RE NOW ABOUT TO DECLARE WAR!

I HADN'T HEARD. I CAME TO SEE YOU. WANT TO GO SOMEPLACE?

SURE, WHY NOT? I'VE GOT NOTHING ELSE TO DO NOW. JUST GET ME OUT OF THIS INTERMINABLE HEAT.


NO SOONER SAID THAN DONE!
NEXT STOP... THE NORTH POLE!

COLD ENOUGH FOR YOU?
IT'S LOVELY, LIVING IN METROPOLIS, BEING CROWDED BY MILLIONS OF PEOPLE, YOU FORGET SUCH THINGS STILL EXIST.
I ENVY YOUR BEING ABLE TO SEE THINGS LIKE THIS ANY TIME YOU WANT.

I KNOW. I ONLY WISH I ALLOWED MYSELF THESE PLEASURES MORE OFTEN.
I HARDLY TAKE THE TIME TO ENJOY WHAT'S AROUND ME, IN THAT WAY, I GUESS I'M PRETTY MUCH LIKE EVERYONE ELSE.

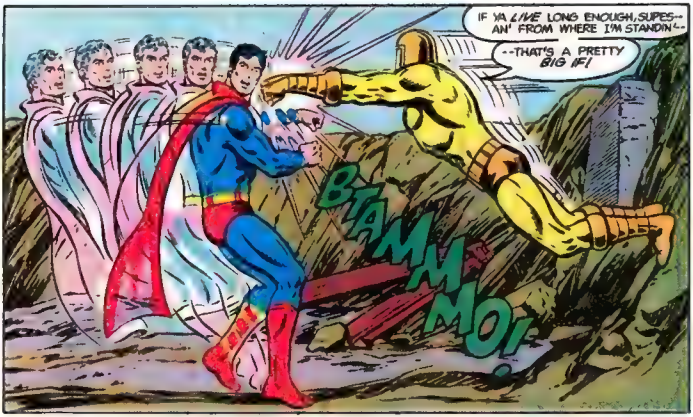
WE ALL TAKE NATURE'S WONDERS FOR GRANTED.

I'VE FLOWN THROUGHOUT THE UNIVERSE, I'VE SEEN MARVELS WHICH WOULD STUN YOU... WORLDS SO BEAUTIFUL YOU WANT TO CRY...
...YET IT'S EARTH THAT HOLDS MY HEART, AND EARTH'S BEAUTY WHICH DOES BRING TEARS.
THIS IS SUCH A LOVELY PLANET. I ONLY WISH WE DIDN'T SPEND HALF OUR TIME TRYING TO DESTROY IT.
CAN I ASK YOU SOMETHING? I TOLD YOU THERE MAY BE A MIDDLE EAST WAR--YET YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING THAT COULD STOP IT. WHY?
LOIS, I HAVE TO CONSTANTLY RESIST USING MY POWERS AS IF I WERE GOD.
I CAN'T! I WON'T STOP MAN FROM ACTING LIKE MAN!
IF I DID, I'D BE INTERFERING WITH DESTINY!
BUT THINK OF ALL THE GOOD YOU COULD DO!
--OR ALL THE BAD! OTHER PEOPLE MIGHT NOT AGREE THAT WHATEVER DECISION I MAKE IS THE RIGHT ONE.
I DON'T BUY THAT. YOU'VE NEVER HURT ANYONE. WHO COULD ARGUE WITH YOU?
THERE ARE TOO MANY SIDES, TOO MANY GRAY AREAS... YES, I CAN FIGHT VILLAINS, I CAN HELP PEOPLE-- BUT I WON'T ALLOW MYSELF THE FREEDOM OF TELLING PEOPLE WHAT TO DO--
--WHO TO VOTE FOR... WHICH POLITICAL SYSTEM IS THE CORRECT ONE.
I COULD, FOR ONE. I TOLD YOU, LOIS, I'M NOT GOD--I'M A MAN GIFTED WITH EXTRAORDINARY POWERS...
...BUT A MAN NONETHELESS.
I DON'T THINK YOU REALLY UNDERSTAND THE LIMITS MY POWERS FORCE ON ME.
MAYBE I DON'T WANT TO--NOT WHEN THOUSANDS MAY DIE IN A NEEDLESS WAR!

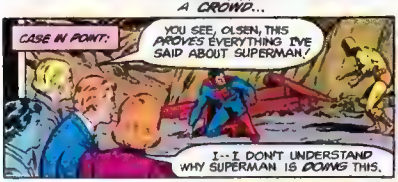
I'M SORRY, SUPERMAN-- BUT IF I HAD YOUR POWERS, I'D SPEND LESS TIME CHASING DOWN CRIMINALS LIKE LUTHOR AND MORE HELPING THIS WORLD OUT OF ITS CURRENT MESS.
I DIDN'T WANT THIS TO BECOME AN ARGUMENT...
NEITHER DID I, BUT WE CAN'T CHANGE FACTS, CAN WE?
WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO HOME?
YEAH... BUT DON'T TAKE ME... JUST DROP ME OFF AT THE AIRPORT.
I NEED TIME TO THINK.
THE FLIGHT TO FAIRBANKS AIRPORT IS SILENT...
... AND THEIR PARTING QUICK.
WITHIN SECONDS, SUPERMAN IS SKY-BORNE AGAIN...
...AND SPEEDING HOME TO METROPOLIS--
... WHERE CRUEL REALITY SHATTERS A THOUSAND SCATTERED THOUGHTS...
WHAT IN THE WORLD? NEUTRON--?
HE'S FREE!?
KRRUNCHHH!

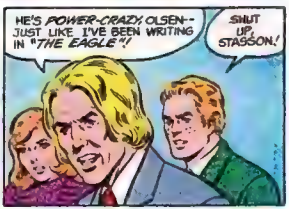
WHY DO YOU KEEP DOING THIS, NEUTRON? DO YOU HAVE A SUICIDE COMPLEX?
I'M GOING TO STOP YOU AS EASILY AS I DID BEFORE.
WHY DO YOU KEEP INTERFERING?
WELL, I'M NOT ABOUT TO LET YA!
YOU CAN TRY, BUT SOMETHING TELLS ME THIS IS ONE COURSE YOU'RE GOING TO FAIL!
NOT BAD-- BET THAT SENDS YER OTHER FOES FER A LOOP, EH?
WELL, YA FERGET SOMETHIN', PAL--I AIN'T NO ORDINARY GUY!
I DON'T HAVE FLESH AN' BONE-- I GOT PURE ENERGY RUNNIN' THROUGH ME!
NO SUPER-PUNCH IS GONNA LAY DOWN NEUTRON!
BYANGG!
MAYBE NOT, "PAL," BUT EVEN YOUR ENERGY WON'T LAST FOREVER!
YOU'LL EXPEND YOUR POWERS LONG BEFORE I TIRE OUT!
SK-W MOOO!
17

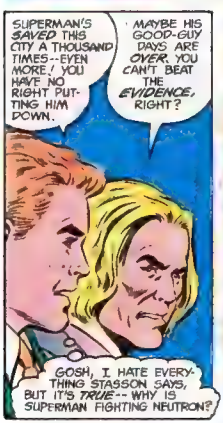
CONTINUED ON PAGE 50 FOLLOWING

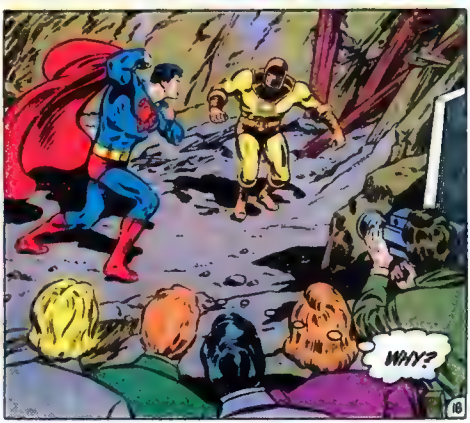


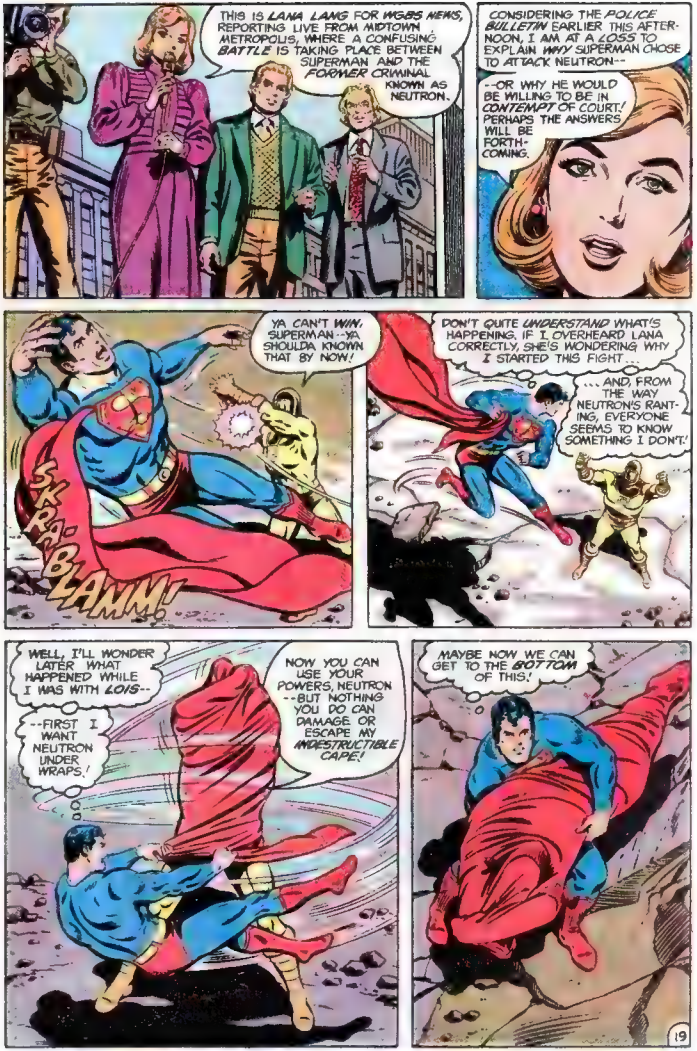
IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO IMAGINE A BATTLE RAGING IN THE MIDDLE OF METROPOLIS THAT DOESN'T QUICKLY GATHER A CROWD...

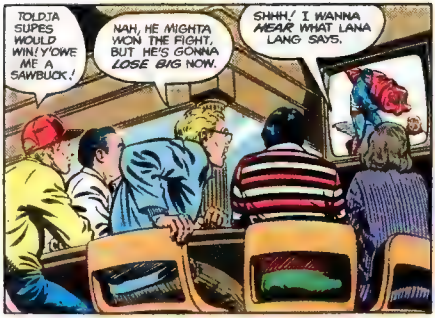

CASE IN POINT:
YOU SEE, OLSEN, THIS PROVES EVERYTHING I'VE SAID ABOUT SUPERMAN!
I--I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY SUPERMAN IS DOING THIS.

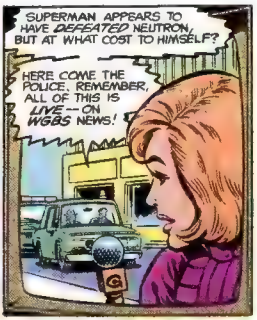



SUPERMAN'S SAVED THIS CITY A THOUSAND TIMES--EVEN MORE! YOU HAVE NO RIGHT PUTTING HIM DOWN.
MAYBE HIS GOOD-GUY DAYS ARE OVER. YOU CAN'T BEAT THE EVIDENCE, RIGHT?
GOSH, I HATE EVERYTHING STASSON SAYS, BUT IT'S TRUE-- WHY IS SUPERMAN FIGHTING NEUTRON?

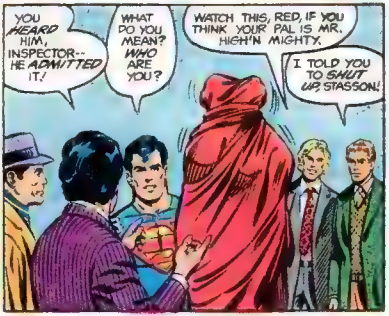



THIS IS LANA LANG FOR WGBS NEWS, REPORTING LIVE FROM MIDTOWN METROPOLIS, WHERE A CONFUSING BATTLE IS TAKING PLACE BETWEEN SUPERMAN AND THE FORMER CRIMINAL KNOWN AS NEUTRON.
CONSIDERING THE POLICE BULLETIN EARLIER THIS AFTERNOON, I AM AT A LOSS TO EXPLAIN WHY SUPERMAN CHOSE TO ATTACK NEUTRON--
--OR WHY HE WOULD BE WILLING TO BE IN CONTEMPT OF COURT. PERHAPS THE ANSWERS WILL BE FORTHCOMING.
YA CAN'T WIN, SUPERMAN--YA SHOULDA KNOWN THAT BY NOW!
SKRA-BLAAM!
DON'T QUITE UNDERSTAND WHAT'S HAPPENING. IF I OVERHEARD LANA CORRECTLY, SHE'S WONDERING WHY I STARTED THIS FIGHT...
....AND, FROM THE WAY NEUTRON'S RANTING, EVERYONE SEEMS TO KNOW SOMETHING I DON'T.
WELL, I'LL WONDER LATER WHAT HAPPENED WHILE I WAS WITH LOIS--
--FIRST I WANT NEUTRON UNDER WRAPS.
NOW YOU CAN USE YOUR POWERS, NEUTRON --BUT NOTHING YOU DO CAN DAMAGE OR ESCAPE MY INDESTRUCTIBLE CAPE!
MAYBE NOW WE CAN GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS.
19

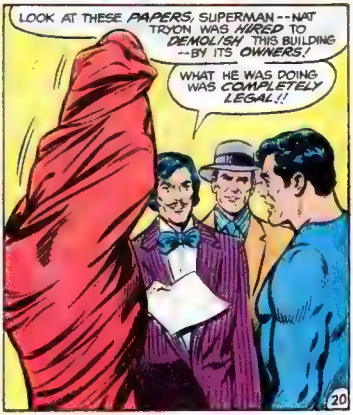

TOLD JA SUPES WOULD WIN! Y'OWE ME A SAWBUCK!
NAH, HE MIGHTA WON THE FIGHT, BUT HE'S GONNA LOSE BIG NOW.
SHHH! I WANNA HEAR WHAT LANA LANG SAYS.

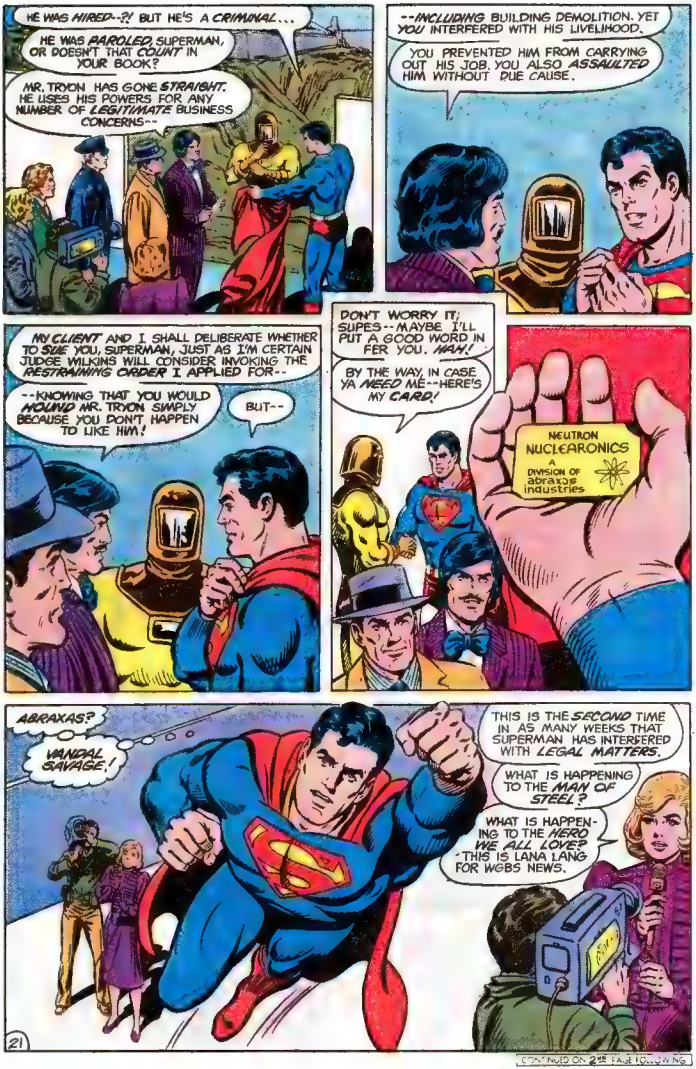

SUPERMAN APPEARS TO HAVE DEFEATED NEUTRON, BUT AT WHAT COST TO HIMSELF?
HERE COME THE POLICE. REMEMBER, ALL OF THIS IS LIVE -- ON WGBS NEWS!

SUPERMAN, WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS?
IT'S NEUTRON, INSPECTOR HENDERSON -- HE ESCAPED AND WAS DEMOLISHING THAT BUILDING!
I STOPPED HIM IN TIME!


YOU HEARD HIM, INSPECTOR -- HE ADMITTED IT!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? WHO ARE YOU?
WATCH THIS, RED, IF YOU THINK YOUR PAL IS MR. HIGH'N MIGHTY.
I TOLD YOU TO SHUT UP, STASSON!

I'M LOUIS HAVIUS, MR. TRYON'S ATTORNEY.
MR. HAVIUS, I CAUGHT YOUR CLIENT DESTROYING THIS PROPERTY.
SO? YOU EVER WONDER WHY HE WAS DOING IT? OF COURSE YOU DIDN'T.


LOOK AT THESE PAPERS, SUPERMAN -- NAT TRYON WAS HIRED TO DEMOLISH THIS BUILDING -- BY ITS OWNERS!
WHAT HE WAS DOING WAS COMPLETELY LEGAL!!


HE WAS HIRED--?! BUT HE'S A CRIMINAL...
HE WAS PAROLED, SUPERMAN, OR DOESN'T THAT COUNT IN YOUR BOOK?
MR. TRYON HAS GONE STRAIGHT. HE USES HIS POWERS FOR ANY NUMBER OF LEGITIMATE BUSINESS CONCERNS--
--INCLUDING BUILDING DEMOLITION. YET YOU INTERFERED WITH HIS LIVELIHOOD.
YOU PREVENTED HIM FROM CARRYING OUT HIS JOB. YOU ALSO ASSAULTED HIM WITHOUT DUE CAUSE.
MY CLIENT AND I SHALL DELIBERATE WHETHER TO SUE YOU, SUPERMAN, JUST AS I'M CERTAIN JUDGE WILKINS WILL CONSIDER INVOKING THE RESTRAINING ORDER I APPLIED FOR--
--KNOWING THAT YOU WOULD MOUND MR. TRYON SIMPLY BECAUSE YOU DON'T HAPPEN TO LIKE HIM!
BUT--
DON'T WORRY IT, SUPES--MAYBE I'LL PUT A GOOD WORD IN FER YOU. HAH!
BY THE WAY, IN CASE YA NEED ME--HERE'S MY CARD!
NEUTRON NUCLEARONICS
A DIVISION OF abraxas industries
ABRAXAS?
VANDAL SAVAGE!
THIS IS THE SECOND TIME IN AS MANY WEEKS THAT SUPERMAN HAS INTERFERED WITH LEGAL MATTERS.
WHAT IS HAPPENING TO THE MAN OF STEEL?
WHAT IS HAPPENING TO THE HERO WE ALL LOVE? THIS IS LANA LANG FOR WGBS NEWS.
WGBS
21
CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

I NEVER EVEN SUSPECTED SAVAGE WAS BEHIND NEUTRON!
ABRAXUS
THAT MEANS I WAS SET UP AND MADE TO LOOK LIKE A FOOL!
I DON'T LIKE THAT!
SAVAGE...
AH, SUPERMAN. TO WHAT DO I OWE THIS GREAT HONOR?
I SAW WHAT HAPPENED EARLIER... SHAME, SHAME, OLD FRIEND.
YOU REALLY SHOULD LEARN TO CONTROL YOURSELF.
I WANT TO SPEAK WITH YOU-- PRIVATELY!
OF COURSE... PLEASE, FRIENDS-- LEAVE US ALONE. I DARE SAY SUPERMAN WON'T BEAT ME UP, WILL YOU?
WHAT ARE YOU UP TO, SAVAGE?
I TOLD YOU BEFORE, I CRAVE POWER AND YOU ARE IN MY WAY OF ACQUIRING IT!
THEREFORE I SET UP ABRAXAS --A COMPLETELY LEGAL CORPORATION, I MIGHT ADD, TO GAIN THAT POWER THROUGH TECHNOLOGICAL METHODS.
I WILL ACHIEVE GREATNESS WHILE YOU, ON THE OTHER HAND, ARE REDUCED TO A SUPER-POWERED LAUGHINGSTOCK.
YOU'RE INSANE! I SHOULD--
CALM DOWN... THIS MEETING IS BEING VIDEOTAPED. ANY DISPLAY OF VULGAR PHYSICAL FORCE WILL... WELL, I DON'T HAVE TO CONTINUE, DO I?
HOW CAN YOU JUST CALMLY TELL ME ALL THIS? I'LL STOP YOU!
LIKE YOU STOPPED NEUTRON--?

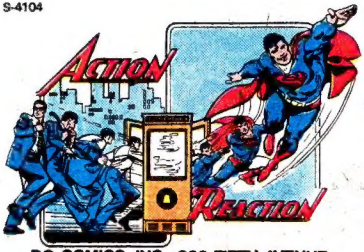
YOU SEE, OLD FRIEND, YOU'RE CONDITIONED TO REACT IN CERTAIN WAYS.
YOU WILL NEVER KNOW IF WHAT YOU ARE SEEING IS SOMETHING I AM LEGALLY INVOLVED WITH--
--OR SIMPLY SOME OLD-FASHIONED CRIME. THEREFORE, YOU WILL ACT AS YOU ALWAYS DO--
--FALLING INTO MY TRAP, SLOWLY MAKING THE CITIZENS OF THIS FAIR CITY DISTRUST YOU!
NO! I WON'T LET YOU!
I'LL FIND SOME WAY TO STOP YOU!
SSSSSSKRAKKK!
OH, SUPERMAN, MY SUPERMAN, YOU ARE SO PREDICTABLE! DON'T YOU SEE? I'VE ALREADY WON!
LOOK AT WHAT YOU'VE DONE! YOU'VE NEVER SHOWN ANGER BEFORE! NOT LIKE THIS!
I'M GETTING TO YOU, SUPERMAN--BECAUSE YOU KNOW I'M RIGHT!
IN THE LONG RUN, SUPERMAN, AN IMMORTAL MUST WIN!
VANDAL SAVAGE MUST WIN!

NEXT ISSUE: THE 45TH ANNIVERSARY OF SUPERMAN IN ACTION

A DOUBLE-SIZED SPECTACULAR FEATURING THE DRAMATIC CHANGES IN THE LIVES OF THE NEW LUTHOR AND BRAINIAC! DON'T DARE MISS IT!

AN INSTANT COLLECTORS' ITEM CLASSIC!

ON SALE MARCH 24th! IT'S A DATE!



DC COMICS, INC., 666 FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10103

Dear Editor,

You can tell Keith Giffen and Dick Giordano that they don't have to knock themselves out on fantastic covers like the one adorning *ACTION* #539. I'll buy the book anyway... honest!

Especially if therein is a story as enjoyable as "Past Imperfect!" This split-*Superman* saga is being handled extremely well. The shocking developments this issue make this the best episode by far. An autopsy on Clark Kent?! What a cliffhanger! (You *are* going to be able to clear up this mess, aren't you?)

And what a pleasure it is to see Gil Kane's art in a DC comic again. His short chapter is *JUSTICE LEAGUE* #200 merely whetted my appetite. No one can draw *The Atom* like Gil!

Aquaman, on the other hand, has looked better than Alex Saviuk's interpretation. The art is competent, but that's the best I can say. There's nothing wrong with Bob Rozakis' story, though. I've enjoyed this latest "mini-saga" so far!

Which brings me to your announcement in the letter column. You want a *demand?* Okay, you've got it! I demand you reinstate *Aquaman, Hawkman* and *The Atom* in *ACTION COMICS*. How's that? So get on it already! Don't consign these heroes to limbo and an overcrowded *JUSTICE LEAGUE*. They are the stuff of which the "Silver Age" was made!

DALE COE
41 Whitecross Road
Warrington, Cheshire WA5 1LR
England

The Atom will be appearing in a mini-series of his own, beginning in April, Dale, and you should be thrilled to hear it's being illustrated by Gil Kane! Also, we hope you didn't miss last month's SUPERMAN SPECIAL, featuring 43 pages of script and art by Mr. Kane!

As for the demand on our back-up features, we offer the following short-snips...-BR

* * * * *

Dear Julie,

As for my opinion on the rotating back-up series, I have mixed feelings. If the *Superman* stories are anything like "Past Imperfect", I vote for full-lengthers! And yet, two of my favorite characters are *The Atom* and *Hawkman*. I want...no, *need*... to see their adventures regularly. The best arrangement might be to revive *THE ATOM AND HAWKMAN* magazine!

DAVID MERCURY
Address Unknown

I'm not going to miss the back-up strips all that much. My high expectations for the current *Aquaman* serial haven't been realized and *Hawkman* and *The Atom*'s last solo tales weren't great either. Maybe Bob Rozakis is consciously or unconsciously getting tired of these back-up characters. All three have appeared in some wonderful short stories in the past so the small space is no excuse. The art isn't remarkably inspired as well. I can only hope that temporary(?) retirement will help these three characters.

JOHN WELLS
PO Box 119
Batavia, IA 52533

.....As for *Aquaman*, you can take it or leave it. I prefer to leave it!

KEVIN T. BROWN
7846F W. Lawrence Ave.
Norridge, IL 60656

.....I like having the whole book devoted to *Superman*, so cutting out the back-ups was a good idea!

RICH WALSH II
PO 5224
Melborne, FL 32901

.....What do you mean you're taking out the back-up features? Are you crazy?! I like *Air Wave, Aquaman* and *The Atom*... and that's all I have to say!

RENE MILLIGAN
327 Cawthorn Dr.
Slidell, LA 70458

And without a decisive demand, the back-up series will remain in limbo, folks!—BR

* * * * *

Dear Editor:

I'm very impressed with *ACTION* #539. *Superman* has been a favorite of mine since I was a child, but never have I seen him handled as well as in the past year. *Superman*'s potential as an "epic" sort of character has never been better realized than by Marv Wolfman.

Lord Satanis is probably the toughest foe *Superman* has ever faced. Being powerless against magic, the Man of Steel has met more than his match. These stories have been so powerfully written that I can feel the tension, the fear and the despair *Superman* feels. Despite the fact I know the good guys always win, I find myself wondering if they really will this time!

Please continue to use Satanis as the ultimate foe for *Superman*. His larger-than-life character makes *Superman* seem all the more a hero.

And hang on to Gil Kane as long as possible. He's giving a new and innovative and exciting look to these pages.

RUSS WISHMAN
RR #1, Box #46
Manson, IA 50563

Gil's off on other work right now, but our artist these past two issues should thrill many readers, including our next correspondent!—BR

* * * * *

Dear Editor,

I just glanced at *ACTION* #539 and felt compelled to write you. I've been a loyal and devoted fan of *Superman* for over twenty years—sticking with him through good times and bad. I feel I have to let you know that I am increasingly disappointed with his adventures in *ACTION*! Why? It's simple!

The artwork is not at all to my liking. I've been spoiled by years of Curt Swan—the master. In recent years, it's gotten better and better, each issue an even greater success. The work is beautiful and better than that in any other comic on the market.

But then you started tampering with success. You took out Curt. Since then, *ACTION* has been pencilled by Joe Staton, Irv Novick, and Gil Kane—all good artists on *other* mags, but not the folks who can breathe life into the adventures of the Man of Steel. Only Curt Swan can produce the masterpieces to which I've been accustomed!

I have not yet *read* #539. I am heartsick over the artwork. I only hope Curt will be returning soon!

PHIL TROTH
516-B Merit Dr.
West Point, NY 10996

* * * * *

Dear Julie:

In the lead story in *ACTION* #539, it was nice to see Gil Kane's talented pencils drawing *The Atom*. I think Kane is the only artist who can properly draw this character. *The Atom* hasn't been handled well since he lost his own book back in the 60's. Gil's rendition brought back fond memories.

I also enjoyed Kane's handling of the art chores in general this issue, but I hope Curt Swan will be back soon. Swan is one of my all-time favorite artists.

STEVEN NOZIK
1971 Eggert Rd. #1
Eggertsville, NY 14226

All of which proves that we can't please all of the art-lovers all of the time... but at least we try!—BR

*****

Dear Julie:

"Past Imperfect" was the strongest thriller that *Superman* has been involved in in a very long time! Being split has very nearly driven this man mad, not to mention almost killing him a couple of times before the dramatic events of this issue. His attempts to reach the past with the aid of *The Atom* and *Flash* were very nice additions to this story, not to mention great pieces of continuity. The Time Pool and Cosmic Treadmill are two important pieces of those two heroes' respective cultures, and it was nice to see them all involved here.

However, our slightly less than Man of Steel overlooked one very important DC character who makes time his business, as with the recent appearance of *Cave Carson* I expected the return of *Rip Hunter—Time Master* to aid *Superman* in getting to the past. Oh well, the past didn't provide a pretty picture anyway as Syrene aptly displayed that she is every bit as nasty as her husband, Lord Satanis. The invulnerable *Superman* finally got a full taste of Merlin's mystic runestone, and from every indication it indeed proved the death of Earth's greatest hero.

Clark's death in the 20th century was traumatic and I found myself saying over and over that this can't be happening! I don't know what Marv has cooked up to set everything right, but it is really going to have to be very good in order to pull this whole story line off! As to our villains, Satanis inhabiting *Superman's* body was a clever move and guarantees plenty of action next issue as these two master mages go for the final kill. 30 days can't come fast enough to satisfy my anticipation over this story!

The art of Gil Kane was fantastic and I was very happy to learn that his work will appear here from time to time. Gil is a part of DC's heritage, and it is only natural that his artistic talents grace DC's main hero. It was also great to see him do *The Atom* again, as those few panels brought back many a fond memory. I trust that Curt Swan will still be a regular in *Superman* though.

The *Aquaman* chapter was very entertaining with its revelations as to what has been going on. It was great to see Mera again, and I hope that our aquatic couple will remain united now. The story really offered explanations and laid the basis for next issue's conclusion, but Bob Rozakis accomplished this with a flair. The art of Saviuk and Adkins was also great.

KENT A. PHENIS
1321 N. Meridian
Apt. 913
Indianapolis, IN 46202

And now, from the "long" to the "short"...—BR

*****

Dear Editor:

I jumped! Never in my eleven years as a comics fan has any one story made me jump like that! Those four words, "Clark Kent is Dead" in *ACTION* #539 sent me into shock! The remaining pages in the story became a blur as I worried about Clark's fate. The battle between Lord Satanis and Syrene seemed so insignificant compared to those four words' effect. I just can't wait to see what Marv Wolfman does to get Clark out of this one. I know it's got to be great!

RICK FEARON
4644 Brentlawn Dr.
Burnaby, BC V5C 3V2 Canada

.....At first when *Superman* was split in two a few issues ago, I didn't think much of the story, but after reading #538 and #539 I'm beginning to change my mind. These two issues showed a refreshing change. Clark's apparent death in #539 shows how close his friends are.

Something tells me #540 is going to be even better.

JOHN BRITTAN
11 Fleetwood Dr.
Daly City, CA 94015

And to put it mildly, John, you ain't seen nothin' yet! Coming up next issue, to celebrate the 45th anniversary of Superman's ACTION debut in 1938, is a double-sized super-special anniversary edition featuring not one but two stories that'll knock your socks off!

You've been seeing the big changes in the life of Superman and his friends in recent issues of ACTION and SUPERMAN, but wait'll you see what we do to the villains! Next issue Marv Wolfman and Cary Bates spin separate stories that will change the lives of Lex Luthor and Brainiac as they have never been changed before!

If you buy no other comic in the month of March, make sure that you get a copy of ACTION #544! You're going to hate yourself if you miss it! (And on that subtle note, we'll bid you "Aloha" until next issue!)—Bob Rozakis

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION
(Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685)

1. Title of Publication: ACTION COMICS
1A. Publication No.: 004-480
2. Date of Filing: October 1, 1982
3. Frequency of Issue: Monthly
3A. No. of Issues Published Annually: 12
3B. Annual Subscription Price: $7.20
4. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication: 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10019
5. Complete Mailing Address of the Headquarters or General Business Offices of the Publishers: 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10019
6. Full Names and Complete Mailing Address of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor: Publisher: DC COMICS, INC., 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10019; Editor: Julius Schwartz, 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10019; Managing Editor: Dick Giordano, 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10019
7. Owner: DC Comics, Inc., wholly owned by Warner Communications, Inc., a publicly held company, both at 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10019
8. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages or Other Securities: None
9. For Completion by Nonprofit Organizations Authorized to Mail at Special Rates: Not Applicable
10. Extent and Nature of Circulation:
10A. Total No. Copies (Net Press Run): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 284,046. Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 276,536. 10B. Paid Circulation: 1. Sales through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors and Counter Sales: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 101,196. Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 96,860. 2. Mail Subscription: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 2,157. Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 1,429. 10C. Total Paid Circulation (Sum of 10B1 and 10B2): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 103,353. Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 98,289. 10D. Free Distribution by Mail, Carrier or Other Means, Samples, Complimentary, and Other Free Copies: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 677. Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 677. 10E. Total Distribution (Sum of C and D): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 104,030. Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 98,966. 10F. Copies Not Distributed: 1. Office Use, Left Over, Unaccounted, Spoiled After Printing: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 2,403. Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 515. 2. Return From News Agents: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 177,613. Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 177,055. 10G. Total (Sum of E, F1 and 2 - should equal net press run shown in A): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 284,046. Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 276,536.
11. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete. Paul Levitz, Vice President-Operations

Weary.

I've done the convention trail in spades this year.

Started in Philly in mid-April...ended at Creation Con in NY Thanksgiving weekend. Did Dallas, Phil Seuling's NY con, San Diego, Chicago, Atlanta, San Francisco, Boston and Wintercon in Oklahoma in between.

Almost learned how to sleep in a hotel bed and eat airlines food without complaining... **Almost.** (Thank God for some of the **good** restaurants in those cities and the people I went to them with.)

You gotta be some kind of nut to agree to be away from hearth and home for 10 weekends during the "nice" weather...or obsessed with the need to find new talent. Probably both.

Anyway, guys, I gotta report...There is talent out there in television land! I know because I sought it and I found it.

What I was doing at all those comic fan conventions is I was conducting a talent search. The conventions advertised that I would be there to give a talk on "How to Break into Comics" (Somehow that sounds like an illegal act!) and then to look at the portfolios of those fans who had brought them...And, yep, I found 25-30 who showed good promise. Asked 'em to do more samples and send them to me at DC. Most of these were better then the portfolios I looked at originally. Encouraging.

But now I had to keep up some kind of communication so that we'd still be talking to each other when (and if) these talented folk became good enough to start working professionally.

Sadly, I found I couldn't keep up this communication properly and still handle my regular workload, so you know what I did? I hired someone to handle that job **full-time!** To communicate with talented folk who can write or draw but aren't sure what to do next.

His name is Sal Amendola, his job is Talent Coordinator, and he's the man at DC to convince that you're the next Marv Wolfman or the next Frank Miller.

I had lunch with Sal yesterday and he asked me to pass along these sensible suggestions to those who feel they have the abilities needed for a career in comics and want to send along samples through the mail.

To wit:

1) Mail **copies** of your work. **Not** the originals. Xeroxes or photostats will be fine.

2) Pack them securely. A piece of heavy cardboard in the envelope discourages postal employees from bending the package.

3) Use sufficient postage for first class mail or special handling. Any more expensive class will be a waste of money.

4) Put someone's name on the envelope; not just DC Comics. If you want it to reach Sal Amendola's desk (I do!), put his name on it.

5) Put your name and address on every page! Sample art often becomes separated from the accompanying letter and the envelope is most often thrown away. Also, individual pages are sometimes separated from the rest. Your name on **every** page guarantees that we know whose work we're looking at, no matter what.

6) A self-addressed, stamped envelope assures the return of your material although we try to return everything anyway. In any case, our response will be faster if you include an **sase**.

Good luck!

Guess what I did from April to November when I wasn't getting on airplanes to go to conventions?

Give up?

I was getting on airplanes to go to Atari (another Warner Communications company).

Atari HQ is located in a place called Silicon Valley (read Sunnyvale, CA) and I made a half-dozen or more trips there between conventions. That was heady stuff...Atari is a neat company. I especially enjoyed working with the programmers. They're a lot like comic people... young, creative, fun-loving, and we felt comfortable with each other as we created ATARI FORCE™ and SWORDQUEST™.

If you don't know what ATARI FORCE and SWORDQUEST are (been hibernating?), they're two comic book series produced by DC Comics for Atari to be packed in with certain cartridges. So far, ATARI FORCE numbers 1, 2 and 3 have appeared in "Defender"™, "Berserk"™ and "Star Raiders"™ cartridges and SWORDQUEST numbers 1 and 2 in cartridges called "EarthWorld"™ and "FireWorld"™ respectively.

If you bought these exciting electronic game cartridges, you know that the comics were an added plus to the general game-play fun at no additional cost.

Fear not, friends...We'll not forget those of you who have yet to enjoy these games. Sometime in 1983, a new, more exciting version of ATARI FORCE will be on the newsstands and the entire SWORDQUEST saga will probably be available in a larger size than the original and released by DC as an album or a mini-series or a series of graphic novels.

SWORDQUEST was written by Roy Thomas and Gerry Conway, drawn by George Perez, and inked and edited by yours truly.

The "new" ATARI FORCE book will be written by Gerry Conway and Roy Thomas and drawn primarily by Jose Garcia-Lopez.

These should be knock-outs...Look for 'em.

Wearier and wearier...

Thank you and good after...zzzzzzzz

Dick

™TM ATARI INC. ™TM STERN ELECTRONICS INC. ™TM WILLIAMS ELECTRONICS INC.